

## **I think I'm gonna marry you by kuiperbelt08**

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**Summary:** Richie gets a phone call that Eddie's getting married. The losers can't let that happen. Takes place in early 2000's. Rated M for Richie's mouth and later sexual themes Not mine. I don't own any of this.

# 1. Chapter 1

Richie cracked his neck and looked at his phone. It was Eddie. He rubbed his eyes, tired from looking at the screen all day. He was thrilled that his record label was a success, even if it meant pulling lots of long days. His label was big enough that he could probably leave early but he still felt like he needed to double check things before signing off on them.

He powered down his computer and answered the phone. "Eddie Spaghetti! It's been too fucking long! How's it hanging?"

"Low and proud," Eddie answered with a slight laugh. The two were on opposite sides of the US, Eddie in NY, helping to run a limo company while Richie was in LA. The two visited each other several times a year, as time allowed. They saw the other losers at least twice a year, at their bi-annual vacation. They all rented a timeshare in Hawaii together and went twice a year, no excuses. Spouses were invited, Bill usually brought his wife, Audra. Bev never brought her husband, Tom. None of the losers like Tom and they all tried to convince Bev to leave him but she would just give them a small smile and say that they didn't understand.

"How are you?" Eddie asked.

Richie smiled into the phone. Even though the men weren't close in location they were still best friends. The two talked several times a month, using skype to catch up when they could. They often talked late into the night, Richie lying on his bed, Eddie on his.

"I'm good Eds, working too hard but what can you do? Empires don't build themselves. What about you? How's it going getting your company into China?"

"It's going slowly but we'll get there. I called with some other news actually."

"Yea? You finally getting a stripper on retainer?" Richie grabbed his coat and locked up his office. He was the last person to leave, as usual. He waved good bye to the night janitor as he walked to his

parking spot.

"No um,I got...engaged." Eddie said hesitantly.

"What?!" Richie knew Eddie was dating someone. Moana? Marcie? Something like that. But Eddie rarely talked about her, he assumed it wasn't serious. "You got engaged to..Mary?"

"Myra. And yes, I asked her yesterday and she said yes." Eddie sounded nervous, not excited.

"Eddie, none of us have even met her. You've only been dating, what, 9 months?"

"Well, we'll fix that. She wants to get married soon. We're having an engagement party in two weeks, can you come?"

Richie wanted to yell into the phone. No, he didn't want to celebrate Eddie marrying someone else. Someone none of them knew. This was wrong.

Richie knew he loved Eddie, was in love with Eddie. He also knew Eddie was straight. Fine, he dealt with it- with alcohol when he was younger and now with a constant flow of younger men. He could handle with just being Eddie's best friend. But this? Having him marry a woman none of them knew? This was too much. Richie decided swallowed his feelings for now. He needed to talk to the other losers.

"Of course I'll come. Text me the date." He needed to meet this woman who won his Eddie's heart.

"Ok, great," Eddie sounded relieved. "I'm calling everyone else to ask them too. You can all meet Myra."

Fucking great, Richie thought. Ou tloud he said "sounds good Eds."

"One other thing?" Eddie asked.

God, wasn't this enough 'good' news? "Yea?"

"Would you...be my best man? I promise it wouldn't be much work, I

can't imagine standing up there without you by me."

Richie had entertained similar thoughts, only instead of watching Eddie marry someone else it was them getting married. He closed his eyes, trying to keep out that thought. "Yea Eds, who else will throw you the raunchiest bachelor party ever?"

"Great, okay, thanks. Well, not for the bachelor party part but the rest" Eddie sounded relieved. "Ok. I'm calling Bill next, gotta ask him to be a groomsman."

"Good, great. Talk to you soon Eds." Richie hung up. He needed a drink, or five.

## 2. Chapter 2

"Have you met this bitch yet?" Bev whispered to Richie as they grabbed drinks. They were in some fancy New York restaurant at the engagement party. The two agreed to be each other's dates, mostly so they could get drunk together. Bev said that Tom had refused to come. He hated how much time Bev spent with them. Richie hadn't seen him since he and Bev got married a few years ago.

Bev had take the news of the engagement about as well as Richie. He'd called her later that night and complained. She knew how Richie felt and constantly told him to tell Eddie, not just her.

*And now it's too late*, Richie thought. "No, I haven't. They should be here by now, right?" Richie and Bev were already two drinks in and haven't seen the other losers or the couple.

Just then Richie saw Bill and Audra. They made a beeline towards the two. Bill and Audra always looked so happy, so in love. It was equal parts adorable and nauseating. Audra was laughing at something Bill had whispered to her. "Fuck off lovebirds. Give me some of that sugar." Richie swooped in and hugged Audra then Bill.

"Hey guys, long time no see." Bill said. His stutter had mostly disappeared, except when he got nervous or scared. As an author he often got asked to go on book tour and declined as often as he could, he still hated public speaking. Luckily, they lived in a remote part of California so Bill played up the mysterious author profile as much as he could.

Bill gave Bev a hug and kissed her cheek. Audra had hated Bev, assuming her closeness with Bill meant that Bev still loved him. Eventually she realized the Bev was like that with all the boys and the two became close friends. They were already whispering, heads low and together.

"Have you seen the man of the hour yet?" Richie asked, looking around again.

"No, but I saw Stan and Ben a minute ago. They were getting drinks."

Mike hadn't been able to make it on such short notice and on a librarian's salary. Richie offered to pay for him but he had refused, saying he'd see everyone next month in Hawaii.

"Speak of the devil" Audra said, point towards the bar. Ben and Stan were walking toward the group. Richie heard Bev's breath hitch, he knew she was in love with Ben- and Ben made no secrets about how he felt about Bev. Richie wasn't the only loser who couldn't get his love life together.

"Guys! The gang is back in business!" Richie gave them both a hug and ruffled Stan's hair, knowing how much he hated it. "Hey bird man."

Stan glared at him slightly and maneuvered his hair back in place. "Hey everyone, where's Eddie? I want to meet this woman."

"No one knows" Bev said, giving Stan a hug. She paused in front of Ben and then gave him a one armed hug. Ben flushed slightly and hugged her back.

"At least there's an open bar!" Richie said, finishing his drink. "Anyone need a refill?" Bev and Audra both asked for drinks and Richie went off to get them.

As he left the bar, drinks in hand, he saw the door open and Eddie walk through. Behind him was...Mrs. K? Richie did a double take. Mrs K was dead, she had died a few years ago. No, this woman's hair was dirty blonde, not brown. And she was a bit shorter. But shit, the resemblance was uncanny.

Everyone in the room stopped talking and clapped as the couple came in. Eddie looked embarrassed but his fiancée- *Myra* Richie reminded himself- seemed to love the attention. She waved at everyone like she was in a fucking parade. Eddie tried to move away from the door but people were demanding they kiss. Myra grabbed Eddie's face and pulled it towards her. Richie wrinkled his nose at the kiss, it didn't look like Eddie enjoyed it at all.

As the two separated Richie looked at Eddie. He was in a suit, a terrible one at that. Eddie was short, barely 5'6 and this suit hung off

him, looking baggy. *Fucking travesty* Eddie was handsome. He had the most compelling eyes and a great smile. His hair was always soft and the color of chestnuts. And his hands. His hands were delicate and slender, but also strong. Richie shook his head to clear his thoughts. And none of that mattered in that terrible suit. Eddie deserved someone who knew how to fit his slender frame and accentuate his body, not hide it behind a cheap suit.

Richie went back to his friends. "Is Eddie marrying his fucking mom?" He said, handing out the drinks.

"Maybe she's nice?" Stan tried.

"She looks like a fucking attention hog. You know all this" Richie waved his hand around "isn't Eddie. He hates fancy shit. He would have picked a seedy bar with pool for his engagement party."

"Well, maybe he's trying to make her happy." Audra tried. Even she seemed to know that this wasn't Eddie's style.

"Or maybe she's a fucking control freak, like his mom was." When Mrs K had died Richie had hoped that Eddie would finally stop trying to please her. He went to business school for her, started the limo business for her... everything seemed like he wanted to please her. And now he was marrying her fucking twin.

"Beep beep Richie, they're coming over" Ben said quietly.

Richie turned around and saw Eddie. Eddie saw him and smiled, making Richie's heart flip. *Fuck, stop it! It's his fucking engagement party. He's getting married.*

"Hey everyone! This is Myra!" Eddie gave everyone a hug and introduced his fiancée. Her face looked like she smelled something rotten.

"Oh, I've heard so much about you" she simpered. "Edward's childhood friends." Bev extended her hand and Myra looked at it like she was handing over a wet noodle. Myra ignored Bev completely.

"So, uh, how'd you two meet?" Stan asked, trying to cover the embarrassing moment. Bev was shooting daggers at the woman.

"Myra worked for me and we started dating," Eddie said, trying to ignore the awkwardness. Richie knew that he probably pissed him off that Myra treated Bev like that.

"Yes, Edward needed someone to take care of him after his dear mother died. Poor boy wasn't taking care of himself." Myra said, looking at Eddie.

"Eds has been taking care of himself since he was 18, I'm sure he was fine." Richie couldn't help it. This woman was Mrs. K incarnate.

Bev kicked him lightly. "Well, maybe, if you could call pizza and take out 'taking care of himself.'" Myra glared at Richie. "I've gotten him to do 2 juice cleanses and now he's taking all the proper medicine. He even carries a crystal for his health." Myra motioned to Eddie. "Show them dear."

Eddie looked embarrassed. "No, Myra. I didn't bring it."

"Edward! You need to carry it with you all the time, you know how much it helps you allergies!"

Eddie shrugged and tried to change the conversation. "Bill, when is the next book out? Soon, right?"

Bill started to answer and Myra interrupted him "Oh, Edward! I see the Smiths, we must go say hello, I'm sure these people" she waved dismissively at the group "will wait. We've got to mingle after all." She grabbed Eddie's arm and pulled him away.

"I'll talk to you guys later! Great to see you!" Eddie said as he walked away.

Once they were out of earshot Richie and Bev both said "What the fuck". Richie was happy to see Bev was as furious as him.

"That woman is a grade-A bitch. And crystals? You've got to be fucking kidding me." Richie said, feeling his anger bubble up.

"Well, she clearly cares for Eddie." Ben tried to say.

"No, she doesn't! It's Eddie's mom all over again! Did he look happy?"



She has him in a fucking suit and drinking bullshit juices!" Richie said.

"It was only a short meeting, maybe she's not so bad," Stan said.

"Yea, short because she fucking pulled him away as soon as she could" Bev said, tearing a small napkin into shreds.

"Well there's a lot of people here," Audra stated. "They can't just talk to old friends."

"What do you think Bill?" Richie knew Bill would hate her. If he admitted it the others would too.

"She's..not what I expected." Richie made the 'go on' motion with his hand. "She does seem controlling."

"Yes!" Bev exclaimed. "She seems like a bitch!"

Stan and Ben nodded along, willing to admit their dislike if Bill did.

Richie looked over at Eddie, he wasn't paying attention to the conversation Myra dragged him into. He was looking at Richie. Their eyes met and he mouthed 'sorry' to his best friend. Myra was gesturing wildly, clearly telling a story. She paused and looked at Eddie, clearly expecting him to chime in. When she saw he wasn't listening she pursed her lips and looked around, trying to see what was holding her fiance's attention.

She saw Richie and her eyes narrowed. Richie gave her a small, sarcastic wave. She pursed her lips and grabbed Eddie's arm again, dragging him further away from the group. Richie watched them walk away, getting angry again.

"Earth to Richie, hello" Audra waved her hand in front of Richie's face. He was staring so hard at his friend he hadn't been listening to the conversation.

"I'm going to break them up. No fucking way is he marrying her." Richie decided, turning back to the group. "He's fucking miserable."

Bev whooped, "I'm in! It's been too fucking long since we've plotted

together Tozier."

"What about the rest of you? Will you help? We can't let Eddie marry her." Richie asked them, imploringly.

Ben nodded right away, and Bill did too after a moment. Stan shook his head, "can't you wait? It was only our first impression."

"No, I can't fucking wait. She wants to marry him in less than 6 months. There's no time to wait." Richie glared at Stan, waiting for a real answer.

"You're all crazy. Ok, I'm in. But you and Bev are in charge of this, I'm just a pawn." Stan relented.

Bev whooped again and gathered all the men in her arms. "Alright, fuck yea. Listen up you assholes, it's time for Operation Break up Richie and Myra."

"T-that's a long name Bev," Bill interjected, moving back and putting an arm around Audra.

"Well you think of a fucking name then, I'm running on anger and alcohol."

"Operation Free Gazebo" Ben said. Everyone laughed, surprised he remembered that. After Eddie had found out most of his pills were bullshit he called them gazebos for months, instead of placebos. No one let him live it down.

"Fuck yea, Free Gazebo" Richie said, happy his friend were going to help.

The friends started planning how to break them up.

### 3. Chapter 3

Thanks for whoever let me know that this chap was jacked! Fixing it now!

Worth mentioning, if you like this I have a bunch more up on Archive of our own- it's just easier to publish there. Same name!

Richie met Eddie for breakfast the next morning, just the two of them, before he flew back. The group want him to get more information on Myra and he wanted to see Eddie.

"So tell me more about this lady of yours." Richie said, sipping his bloody mary and making a face, *not enough vodka*.

Eddie laughed and pulled out a single serving vodka bottle, handing it to Richie. "You always want 4 parts vodka, one part tomato juice." He said when Richie looked at him questionly. "Nowhere makes it strong enough for you."

Richie grinned and poured the small bottle in. "You take such good care of me Eds." Richie swore that Eddie blushed, just a little. "Now, all about Miss Myra."

"Don't call me Eds." He took a drink of his coffee. "What do you want to know?"

"How's the sex?" One of the theories, mostly put forth by Ben, was that the sex must be really good for them to be together. Richie didn't buy it.

Eddie definitely blushed now. "It's um, fine. It's fine." He sputtered out.

"Fine? Just fine?" Richie raised an eyebrow.

"Yea, fine. Fine isn't bad Richie. And sex isn't the only thing in a relationship."

"Ok- I don't believe you by the way, but sure, I'll buy that. So if the sex is 'fine' what do you love about her?" Richie leaned in, holding his

drink.

"She's been there for me, she really cares about me." Eddie wouldn't meet Richie's eyes.

"So do the losers and you aren't marrying us." *Me.*

"Well no, it's different. For one thing polygamy is still illegal." Richie chuckled. "And Myra and I have been dating for a bit and she wants to get married. So I asked her." Eddie seemed annoyed at Richie's questioning.

"Well how fucking romantic. God, I'm glad romance isn't dead in New York." Richie put as much sarcasm as he could in his response.

Eddie's jaw clenched and he glared at Richie. "Fuck you, you aren't married. You barely even have relationships, you just sleep with people without even learning their names. You don't know anything about love or marriage."

"That doesn't mean I don't know what love is! Just because I sleep with a lot of people doesn't mean I don't get an opinion about your shitty relationship. I don't want to marry the first person who I have 'fine' sex with or who buys me a crystal!" Richie leaned back and crossed his arms.

"I'm not marrying the first person- and don't talk about her like you know her. I want to marry her, I'm happy!" Eddie was struggling to control his voice.

Richie, on the other hand, was fine causing a scene. His tone increased as he said "You sure seem fucking happy. Fine sex and asking her to marry you because she asked? Yea, fucking storybook romance there." Richie was angry, Eddie clearly didn't love the woman- why be with her? What was he doing?

"You are the **last** person I'm taking relationship advice from. You wouldn't know love if it bit you on the ass." Eddie grabbed his coat and left.

"I've been bitten on the ass and I liked it thanks! Don't need to be in love for that!" Richie called after him, not caring that people were

staring. Richie threw down money and left, feeling pissed off.

He called Bev in his taxi and told her what happened. "Fuck Richie, go for the jugular much?"

"He's not happy Bev, he has to see that." Richie lit up a cigarette. Unofficially, he had quit but being stressed made him go back to old habits.

"He will Richie, just try not to piss him off so much that he doesn't come to Hawaii." Richie heard a familiar voice in the background.

"Did Tom decide to come after all?" Richie was happy to talk about something besides Eddie and his sham engagement.

"What? No? Oh that was...someone from housekeeping. Look, I've got to go, Just call Eddie later and apologize, he needs to come with us. And fill everyone else in on what you learned." Bev hung up.

*I can think of one person I don't need to fill in* Richie smiled. He wanted Bev happy and Ben seemed to make her happy. He hoped those two would work their shit out.

## 4. Chapter 4

Richie waited until the next day to call Eddie. He needed to calm down and at least sound like he was sorry, even if it was a lie. It was a late night for him so it was even later for Eddie. Richie started a skype call anyway, he could just leave a voicemail if Eddie was asleep.

Eddie picked up after a few rings, sitting shirtless at his kitchen table. Richie never got used to seeing Eddie without a shirt. Eddie had gotten into weightlifting after college and, while not ripped, he had good definition. It made Richie's breath hitch whenever he saw it.

Richie was just lanky and he hated it. He could never seem to put on muscles, instead he was just long. *At least I'm long where it counts* Richie smiled at his own joke.

"What do you want Trashmouth?" Eddie was obviously still upset.

Richie decided that teasing would be a bad move. "Look, I'm sorry, okay? Your engagement was such a surprise and I was trying to learn more about Myra. I went about it all wrong." He put on his best 'I'm sorry' face, complete with sad puppy eyes.

"Yea, you fucking did." Richie could tell that Eddie wasn't really mad anymore, he'd already accepted the apology.

"I did, I'm sorry." Richie pushed out his lower lip, "Forgive me?"

"Of course, asshole. Do you use those eyes on your boyfriends too?"

"Nah Eds, they're just for you." Eddie smiled. "So for real though, tell me about Myra."

"She's...comfortable. I want to get married Richie, I'm sick of dating. And she cares about me."

*I'll marry you. Just say the word baby.* "As long as you're happy Eds." Eddie paused, not responding. "You are happy, right?"

Eddie looked down. He hated lying to Richie and would usually just

avoid questions he didn't want to answer. "Um, I need some water. I'll be right back, ok?"

"Sure, whatever." Richie watched Eddie get up, tilting his head to watch his butt in the pajama pants. When he was out of screen Richie leaned back and drank deeply from his cocktail.

Suddenly someone else's face filled the screen- Myra. "Well hello Richie. I was wondering who Eddie was getting out of bed for." She said as she sat down.

Richie had to stop himself from sneering at her- and ignoring that she was sleeping over. "Hello Myra." He said coldly.

"Now what could you possibly need my fiancé for at midnight?"

"Wedding planning, you want a quick engagement we need to plan at all hours." He replied quickly.

She laughed without humor. "I don't believe you. You must think I'm an idiot."

"You tell me then, what were we talking about?" Richie wasn't about to take any shit from this conniving woman.

"I saw how you looked at him at our party. I didn't want any of you there, I tried to convince Edward not to invite you. But he insisted. And then there you were, staring at him like you wanted to push him against a wall. I thought it was going to be that slut Beverly that I had to worry about. Turns out it was the fag from LA." She spat out the word 'fag' with such disdain Richie's eyes widened.

Then he quickly recovered. He had no idea he was so obvious- or that Myra was paying so much attention. "It's not like that. We're not like that." He protested.

"You're right it's not. He doesn't love you." Myra leaned in. "He's mine. And after we get married you can say goodbye to these skype chats and emails. Edward won't need any of you. "

"Eddie always needs us, we need each other. That's the fucking point of friendship." Richie was outraged hearing all this. No one split up

the losers, especially not some Mrs. K incarnate.

"He's told me all about your 'friendship'. About that summer none of you remember, him breaking his arm. From how he tells it it sounds like you were responsible for it" She paused to let that sink in. "Well now I'm here to protect him, you'll never touch him again. Listening to him talk about you, he thinks the sun shines out your ass. He thinks you'll protect him from everything and that you'll always be there. But where were you when his arm was broken? And over the years? I can see through your bullshit, you only care about yourself." She looked pleased with herself.

Richie was trying to think of a response when he heard Eddie returning. "Hey honey, are you and Richie talking?" He sounded surprised.

"Just wanted to get you know your best man, dear." Myra said, looking down at Richie as she stood.

"Oh, ok, great!" Eddie seemed eager to believe this lie. He went to sit back down but Myra caught his face and kissed him hard. Eddie seemed uncomfortable and Richie knew it was for his benefit. *Power play.*

When she finally let go she said "Don't be too late, I'll be waiting, baby."

Eddie sat down again, looking stunned. Richie's blood was boiling. *I'm taking Eddie back* he thought. *That bitch is going down.*



## 5. Chapter 5

Richie had emailed all the losers about his exchange with Myra. He left out the name Myra called Bev, she didn't need to hear that. Everything else he wanted them to know, to know that it wasn't just him being crazy. Myra clearly needed to be stopped.

The losers' trip to Hawaii was coming up. That was when Operation Free Gazebo would take place. Richie had made an extra arrangement that he didn't tell the other losers about. When they could, Bev and Richie showed up one night early to set up. Richie showed up a few hours before he expected Bev, having taken an earlier flight.

The timeshare had 7 rooms, one for each of the losers, plus a few couches in case they ever brought someone else. Richie had called management and asked them to remove the bed from Eddie's room. The manager had balked, insisting that he couldn't. Luckily, enough money made him realized that he could.

Richie wasn't planning to just break up Eddie and Myra this week. He was going to see if Eddie wanted him as much as he wanted Eddie, or even a fraction as much. Richie knew Eddie was bisexual, and that he had liked Richie in high school. Richie had been too stupid to realize what they had and had fucked it up. Maybe he could make up for lost time.

He arrived at the time share and looked around, checking Eddie's room first. The bed was removed, a bullshit note on the end table saying it broke. Eddie could sleep on a couch but Richie knew he wouldn't. Sleeping where other people had sat and sweat made Eddie ill. He wasn't nearly the hypochondriac he used to be but he still had a few odd habits. He planned to offer Eddie a spot in his king size bed, under the guise of friendship. The two always used to sleep together in high school, and even after when one visited the other. Hopefully Eddie would still be okay with it.

Richie open the fridge and put away some groceries and lots of alcohol. He put away the snacks too. Finally, he opened the CDs he had brought. Richie insisted on being in charge of the music. All the

other losers had terrible taste in music, except Mike, who, for being a librarian in Derry, kept up with new artists surprisingly well.

Richie always brought artists he was thinking of signing to get others opinions. While the losers couldn't find good music on their own they had a good ear for who was worth keeping. Richie was trying to find artists he believed in for the long term, not just one hit wonders. The losers could usually help him distinguish between the two. For now though, Richie just put on Queen, knowing Bev would appreciate the irony.

With things set up Richie sat down with a book to read until Bev came. He rarely got to sit and read anymore. He must have fallen asleep because he woke up it was dark outside. There was no sign of Bev. He called her quick, wondering where he was.

"This is Bev! Keep it short and sweet." *Voicemail, shit.* Richie left her a quick 'call me back' message and made a sandwich. He needed to either work less or take more vacations. Falling asleep midday wasn't a good sign. He made his sandwich and powered on his laptop to check emails. Another hour later he still hadn't hear from Bev. He decided to go to sleep and try her again tomorrow.

## 6. Chapter 6

Richie woke up to someone blowing in his ear. He swatted towards the air, "Fuck off asshole."

"You don't even know who it is."

Richie opened his eyes, he had assumed it was Bev. Instead it was Eddie, looking very proud of himself. "Eddie Spaghetti!" Richie pulled the smaller man on top of him, intent on getting revenge for being woken up.

"Hey! Not fair!" Richie flipped Eddie under him and trapped his arms under his thighs.

"That's what you get for waking me up." Richie leaned in and licked Eddie's cheek, leaving a wet trail behind.

"Beep beep Richie! Germs!" Eddie struggled under Richie but couldn't move.

"You blew in my ear, you must have wanted to end up in my bed." Richie teased, lightly licking Eddie's ear.

He shuddered under Richie. "Well, you looked so peaceful and gorgeous. It was weird. I had to wake you up."

"Hey, fuck you. I always look gorgeous. Have you seen my hair?" Richie flipped a lock, smirking.

"Yea, you've got fucking great hair. Let me up now?" Richie leaned in until their noses were touching, planning to lick Eddie again. Eddie licked his lips and stared at Richie's lips. Richie paused, wondering if he dared to kiss Eddie. Before he could decide he felt a hand on his hip, pushing him over. Eddie had worked a hand free and pushed Richie off, then got off the bed.

"I'm only here because there's no bed in my room. Do you know what happened?" Eddie smoothed out his clothes. He was still dressed for winter in NY, not a Hawaii vacation.

"They called and said that the last people broke it, Probably some hot, kinky sex." Richie sat up and pulled on some clothes.

"Well, where am I supposed to sleep?" Eddie turned around as Richie got dressed.

"Eds, I don't have anything you haven't seen before. No need to protect my modesty."

"I just don't need to see your hairy back."

"I live in LA. I get my back waxed, it's practically a requirement there." Richie pulled on a shirt. "You can turn around."

Eddie turned. "That blue looks great on you. Brings out your eyes."

Richie grinned and threw an arm around Eddie, "thanks babe."

Eddie moved out from under him. "Don't call me that. Now, where am I sleeping? I want to put my bags somewhere."

"Well there's the couches," Richie started and Eddie made a face *Perfect!* "Or you can sleep in here? Its a king sized bed after all."

"Sleep in here? With you?" Eddie flushed slightly.

"What? It'll be like old times, only with a much bigger bed. I promise not to try anything, unless you want to if course." Richie waggled his eyebrows.

"No, just sleeping will be good." Eddie left and returned with a big suitcase. "I'm going to change." He stopped, clearly expecting Richie to leave.

"Oh, I don't mind hairy backs. I think they're sexy."

"Beep beep Richie, Just leave so I can change and shower. I stink like an airport."

"Fine, but I hate to miss the show. Did you see Bev out there?"

"No, it's just us so far." Eddie said, walking to the bathroom and

shutting the door.

*Where was Bev?* Richie wondered as he walked into the kitchen, getting coffee started and opening some cereal for breakfast. Richie checked his phone and saw he had a text message from Bev. *Everything is okay! Grabbed a later flight, see you soon. Kisses!* Good, she was still coming, and probably with a good story, knowing Bev.

*At least she's okay* He thought, pouring water in for the coffee. It was around 7am, Mike was the next person due, around noon. He had several hours alone with Eddie. Perfect.

When Eddie came out of the room Richie was sitting with his laptop open again, replying to an email from someone in HR. "Richie, it's vacation, stop working."

"All these people are children who fall apart without me." Richie took a sip up coffee, rereading his reply.

"That's not true, you hired them. I'm sure they're great." Eddie sat next to Richie, coffee and bagel in hand. "You need to be able to turn off."

Richie smiled at him. "Turn off? Around you I'm only turned on." Eddie rolled his eyes. "Okay, you're right. I'll shut this down." Richie sent the email and closed his computer. "What should we do this morning?"

Eddie sipped his coffee, thinking. "When is the next person coming?"

"Mike should be here around 12." That reminded Richie, "What are you doing here so early? I thought you were taking a red eye tonight."

Eddie stared into his coffee, not answering for a minute. "I caught an earlier flight, it was cheaper." He said finally.

Richie was sure that was a lie but decided to let it go. "Eddie and Richie, team of the century. Two bachelors on the loose."

Eddie laughed, "Not quite how I'd describe it. I'm engaged remember?"

*I tried to forget.* "Different time zone, doesn't count. It's in the rules."

"I think Myra would disagree." Eddie finished his bagel and stood. "Let go to the beach, I've got a book and it's not too hot out yet." Richie nodded in agreement and went to change into his swimsuit. Eddie changed after and the two went down to the beach, after Richie wrote a quick note where they were in case someone else came early.

The men found two chairs on the beach and sat. Eddie put on half a bottle of sunscreen while Richie made fun of him. "Eddie, you know that more sunscreen doesn't matter, right?"

"Shut up Richie, I'm not burning on my first day. Get my back?"

*Happily.* Richie poured some sunscreen on his hands and slowly rubbed it down Eddie's back, savouring feeling his muscles. He slowly rubbed in in, massaging Eddie as he did so. Eddie sighed happily and leaned into Richie. Wondering how far he could take it Richie moved his arms over Eddie's shoulders and to his chest.

Eddie immediately jumped away. 'Handsy much?"

"You love it" Richie said, sitting down. He wasn't going to push his luck more. Eddie shook his head and sat, opening his book.

They read quietly for about an hour then Richie got bored. He put his book down and went over to Eddie, who peered at him over his book. "What do you want?"

"Well that's rude." Richie leaned down and grasped Eddie around the waist. "Rude people go in the ocean." He picked Eddie up and threw him over his shoulder. Richie was nearly a foot taller, even if Eddie was in better shape. Eddie couldn't escape, though he squirmed and tried to.

"Put me down! What the fuck, Richie!" Eddie pounded his fists on Richie's back.

"All in good time." Richie walked into the water about waist deep and threw Eddie as far as he could. The smaller boy went under the water completely and came up a sputtering.

"You asshole. You're going down." Eddie lunged at Richie, pushing him into the water. Richie grabbed Eddie's hands and pulled him down too. Eddie landed on top of Richie in the water and wrapped his legs around Richie, trying to gain leverage. Richie stood up, Eddie still latched around his waist. Both were laughing. Richie felt lighter than he had in months.

Richie put his hands under Eddie's butt and tried, halfheartedly, to pull him off. "Hey! No ass grabbing!" Eddie cried as Richie squeezed lightly.

"You're wrapped around me like a fucking tiny octopus, what am I supposed to do?" Richie squeezed once more for good measure then moved his hands. Eddie untangled himself from Richie and stepped back, splashing him. The splash hit Richie straight in the face. "Now you're really in for it."

Richie lifted Eddie up by the armpits and held him in the air briefly. He looked so fucking gorgeous like that, wet from the water, laughing, struggling lightly against Richie. Richie felt himself growing hard and put Eddie down quickly. Eddie looked a little disappointed but recovered quickly, splashing Richie again. The two splashed each other for a bit, not touching again. After a while they decided to go back to the house. They walked back, lightly bumping shoulders and laughing.

Richie looked at Eddie, laughing at a joke Richie made. He looked so carefree here. The Eddie at the engagement party and this Eddie were two different people. Eddie was already slightly sunburned, his cheeks and nose were a little red. He didn't have bags under his eyes. His hair was wet and slicked back. This Eddie looked blissful. The Eddie at the engagement party looked broken.

Richie knew that Eddie hated New York. He didn't like the winters or the people. Richie had been trying to get him to move to LA for years. He loved the sun and the ocean so much.

Richie tousled Eddie's hair, making it stick up at odd angles.

"Hey!" Eddie protested, slicking it back again. He smiled at Richie and tousled his hair back. Eddie had always liked Richie's hair. He

used to tell him all the time how he liked the wildness of the curls. Now that it was wet it was even curlier, forming ringlets around Richie's ears and the nape of his neck.

Eddie leaned in and spun one of the curls around his finger. "You better hope you never lose your hair, it's your best feature."

Richie put a hand to his heart in mock horror. "All my features are my best feature! My dark, brooding eyes, my gorgeous cheek bones, my amazing body." He gestured down. "Many have also compliment my other huge..asset." He thrust his hips at Eddie.

"I don't need to know anything about that asset. And anyway, those people are wrong. Its definitely the hair." He fingered another curl, near the Richie's neck.

"Your best feature is your hands" Richie said suddenly, He hadn't meant to but he'd always thought it.

"My...hands?" Eddie looked at them, confused.

"Yea," Richie was blushing a bit. "They're so strong but also delicate. They've gone through so much and they're still willing to help. You have long, amazing fingers. And we have that matching scar on our palms." All of the losers had a scar on one of their palms and no one remembered where it came from. Richie grabbed Eddie's hand with the scar and traced it with a finger. Eddie flushed at the intimate contact. "I love your hands." Richie finished softly. They stood there for a minute, Richie holding Eddie's hand and the two smiling at eachother

Then Eddie seemed to realize that Richie was holding his hand and snatched it back. They were back at the house. "I'm going to go shower, then you can," Eddie said, walking inside. The need to shower after being in the ocean was another quirk Eddie hadn't gotten rid of.

Richie poured himself more coffee and heated it in the microwave. He checked his phone again, seeing several texts from the other losers that they were at the airport or waiting for a connecting flight.



Richie smiled. Nothing made him happier than having all the losers together. He felt whole when they were all in the same place. That was why he had recommended buying the timeshare a few years ago. Everyone had eagerly agreed, loving the idea of having a spot of their own.

All the losers had put more money down so it wasn't a burden on Mike, who made far less than everyone else. He didn't know, of course. He just thought they got a great deal on the place. The losers tried to buy him plane tickets too but he wouldn't let them, saying he wasn't going to be a burden. Richie still managed to buy them sometimes, saying he had earned the miles and couldn't use them.

Richie went to lay on the bed, waiting for the shower. He replied to all the texts, using more exclamation marks than he normally did in a month. He was lying there when Eddie came out in a towel. The smaller man yelped, clearly not expecting Richie.

"I've got to change, what are you doing here?"

"You told me to shower, I'm waiting to shower. Just following orders." Richie's eyes stayed to where Eddie's towel was, low on his hips. It dipped below his hip bones. Richie could see the hair that lead...down. He gulped and got up, walking past Eddie. "See? Showering now." He went in and closed the door, taking a deep breath. Maybe sharing a room wasn't the best idea. Richie started the shower, removed his swimsuit and climbed in, letting the hot water rush over him.

When Richie was done he toweled off and walked out naked, ready to put on clothes. Eddie was on the bed, sitting up, towards Richie. "Fuck Eddie!" Richie covered himself with his hands.

Eddie blushed furiously. "I thought you'd be in a towel!" He covered his eyes.

"Why the fuck would I need a towel? All my clothes are in here!" Richie moved to grab some clean boxers and put them on.

"Who comes out of the shower naked?!"

"I do! Most people do! I live alone, I don't need to a towel to leave the bathroom." He put on some shorts. "You can look." He reached down for a shirt.

Eddie removed his hands and looked at Richie. "You still don't have a shirt on!" He turned away.

"We were just swimming and I had fewer clothes on."

"That's different, that's swimming. This is us, in a bedroom."

"Worried you'll want to jump me Eddie Spaghetti? Worried you'll see these pecs and not be able to contain yourself?" Richie pulled his shirt on and sat by Eddie.

"No, it's different, Richie. It's different." Eddie started when Richie bumped him with his shoulder. He turned, saw Richie was wearing a shirt and sighed, relieved. "Thank you."

"Anything for you Eddie, baby." Richie smiled. "How about some lunch?"

Eddie nodded, "sounds great." Eddie made sandwiches for the two while Richie checked his work email again.

"Seriously, I'm going to hide that thing." Eddie said as he put a plate in front of Richie.

"We're working on signing a new pop group, I just need to answer a couple emails." Richie protested as Eddie took the laptop away.

"You pay other people lots of money to handle that. Enjoy your vacation."

Richie relented, willing to do anything that would make Eddie happy. Eddie smiled and closed the laptop and moved it to another counter.

The two ate lunch and caught up, Richie never asked about Myra and Eddie didn't bring her up. Hawaii was not a place for real life problems. It was wonderfully outside of real life.

After lunch they decided to play a card game. It wasn't long until

Mike came and then they spent time catching up with him. Since he missed the engagement party (and was only filled in via multiple emails) Mike wanted to hear all about it. Eddie was reluctant to talk about it, only saying it was fine and wedding planning was going well. Mike shot Richie a look that said 'This doesn't sound good.' Richie replied with an 'I know' look.

Ben and Stan came next, having shared a cab together. Then Bill and Audra and finally Bev came as they were starting to prepare dinner. She was sporting a black eye, multiple bruises on her arms and she looked happier than Richie had seen her in a long time.

"I left Tom!" She sang, dropping her bags. "I packed up my shit and left that asshole!"

Everyone went over to her, Richie got there first and gave her a hug. "Did that fucker do this to you?" He gestured to the bruises and her eye.

"Yea, it's what finally made me leave him. We got in an argument about me coming here and he decked me. I threw a lamp at him. We fought and I ended up knocking him out. I grabbed my shit, rented a storage unit for two months and peaced out. Sorry I'm late."

Eddie huffed, "You being late is the least of our problems. Why didn't you tell us? We would have helped!" Bev looked at Richie. He'd known about Bev and Tom. He'd tried to get her to leave but she said he was good to her after, that he felt bad. He'd argued with her multiple times, trying to get her to leave and stay with him, or Ben, or anyone. Once, she wouldn't talk to him for a month after. He'd known once she spent more time with Ben she'd realize that she deserved better. Richie had been working on throwing those two together for years.

"It's not that easy." He said after Bev didn't answer. "But what matters is that she's okay now." He put an arm around her. Everyone still seemed to have questions but understood that now wasn't the time. They all gave Bev a quick hug and moved away.

"I'm ready to get drunk, can we do that?" Bev asked, grabbing a beer from the fridge.

"Dinner first!" Bill said, grabbing plates. They all sat at the huge dining room table.

Richie felt whole and happy, sitting between Eddie and Mike, eating four servings of bread. Nothing was better than having all the losers together.

## 7. Chapter 7

After dinner Bev still insisted on getting drunk. The group moved outside and sat on the mix of lawn chairs and cushions provided. Richie was now by Bev and Bill, and Eddie was on the opposite side of the small circle.

"Let's play I've never." Bev said, leaning against Ben. He looked happier than he had in a long time too. Hawaii fixed a lot of problems.

"How do you play?" Mike asked.

"Simple! You say something you've never done, if you have done it you drink. And you don't have to explain yourself unless you want to." Everyone nodded in agreement. "I'll start, I've never...slept with a married person!"

Richie drank alone. Eddie looked at him with a raised eyebrow. "I don't have to answer, it's one of the only rules."

"Ben, you next." Bev said.

"Um, ok, I've never...gotten a hand job in a movie theatre." Bill blushed and drank, so did Stan and Richie. Bev leaned over to Bill and whispered something that sounded like 'we can fix that.'

Stan was next, "I've never... been in love." Everyone else drank, except Ben. After college Stan had fallen into deep depression and started using drugs. It had taken the losers a long time to realize how bad it was, all of them still felt terrible. It was one of the reasons they were in such constant contact now. They eventually convinced Stan to go to rehab, all offering to pay for it. It took him two tries and several years but he was clean and had recently gotten off his antidepressants. He was now a successful architect but he was about four years behind everyone else. All that didn't leave much time for dating.

"It's okay, you will be" Mike gave Stan a small hug.

Stan smiled at Mike and nodded.

Richie looked over at Eddie, wondering if he was thinking about the same thing he was. When they were 17 and in love, crazy, all consuming 17 year old love. Until Richie fucked it up. Eddie looked at Richie and gave him a little smile.

Mike was next, "I've never had a one night stand." Everyone but Audra and Eddie drank.

"Bill! You?" Richie was surprised, he and Audra started dating in college, he didn't think Bill was with a lot of other people.

"Don't have to tell," he said, smirking.

Eddie was next, "I've never...had anal sex." His eyes went to Richie as Richie drank, as did Bev and Stan.

Audra said, "I've never been in love with one of my friends." Everyone laughed a little, most of the losers loved one another at one point. Everyone drank except Mike.

"I've never told anyone I loved them and didn't mean it," Bill said. Bev and Eddie drank. Richie tried to catch Eddie's eyes but he wouldn't look up.

Richie paused, wondering who Eddie was thinking of. *Hopefully not me.* "Having trouble thinking of something you've never done Richie?" Bev teased, poking him with her foot.

"No! Trying to think of something vanilla so all of you can drink and catch up!" Bev laughed. "I've never lived with someone whom I loved." *Ha, there, now everyone can drink.* Everyone did except Stan and...Eddie? Richie watched him, waiting for him to drink and he didn't. *Interesting* Was he trying to drink less? Or was he being honest?

The game continued for a while, getting more ridiculous as everyone tried to guess stuff neither Richie or Bev had some (I've never had an orgy with midgets! I've never had a golden shower!) until everyone was happily drunk, or at least buzzed.

"I'm off to bed." Bev announced, standing shakily. Ben stood up too, helping Bev to the door.

"I wonder if we'll have a free bed tonight," Stan remarked, watching them.

*As long as Eddie doesn't think he can take it,* Richie thought.

"She just left her husband yesterday!" Audra said, "I'm sure he's just helping her." Everyone laughed at Audra's confidence in that statement. None of them really cared though, it had taken years for those two to get together, they could move as fast as they wanted now.

Bill and Audra went to bed next, walking off hand in hand.

"Fuck they're still cute." Richie said, watching them. Stan and Mike nodded. Eddie nodded and shivered. "Are you cold, Eds? Come sit here" Richie pointed to the spot between his legs. He was sitting on a cushion on the ground. Eddie hesitated then came over, leaning against Richie's back. Richie put his chin on Eddie's head and wrapped his arms around Eddie. Nothing beat this.

"You're so warm!" Eddie said, snuggling in a bit.

"It's the LA heat, I carry it with me." Richie joked, putting his chin on Eddie's head.

"So Eddie, Myra didn't want to come spend more time with us?" Stan asked.

Richie felt Eddie stiffen. "Um, no, too much wedding planning to do."

*Liar* Richie thought. He wondered what the truth was. They stayed up talking for a bit, until Richie realized that Eddie was sleeping, curled into him.

"I'm gonna put this guy to bed," He said, gesturing down.

"Don't take advantage of a sleeping Eddie," Mike warned.

Richie looked at him, hurt, "I would never! He will be wide awake

when I make my move." Mie and Stan smiled at him. Richie crouched and scooped Eddie up in his arms, bridal style. He carried Eddie into the room, thinking ironically that maybe he could do this for real one day. Carry him across the threshold. Richie shook his head, man he had it bad for this guy.

Richie place Eddie on the far side of the bed and took off Eddie's shoes, socks and shorts. He left his shirt, not sure if he'd want it removed. He stripped down to his boxers and crawled in next to Eddie, not touching the other man.



## 8. Chapter 8

Richie woke up to Eddie spooning him, the smaller man had thrown an arm around Richie and was nestled against him. Eddie had always been a sleep cuddler, it made Richie happy that he still was.

Richie didn't move for a while, enjoying the closeness, pretending that this could be normal. Eventually he felt Eddie stir and seemed to realize where he was. He moved away and Richie turned around. "Morning Eds."

"Sorry about that," Eddie said, stretching.

"No problem, I'll never turn down a cuddle from my favorite guy." Eddie rolled his eyes. "Can I ask you something Eds?" Eddie nodded. "Why isn't Myra here?"

"Why, do you miss her?" Eddie replied sarcastically.

"No I just...I thought she'd want to get to know us more. We're all pretty fucking great."

Eddie bit his lip, which made him look guilty and incredibly kissable. "She doesn't know I'm here."

Richie felt his eyes widen. "What? Where does she think you are?"

"She thinks I'm in China for work."

"Why did you tell her that?" Eddie hesitated again, clearly deciding how much to tell Richie. "I'll know if you're lying."

Eddie looked into Richie's eyes. Richie could always tell when Eddie was lying, mostly because he was terrible at it. But Richie wasn't going to tell him that.

"She hates all of you. I don't know why. She doesn't want me to talk to any of you after the wedding, or to come here anymore."

Even though Richie knew that about this already hearing it again made him angry. His tone sharpened, "So what, you'll just lie to her

twice a year?"

"No! Once she gets to know all of you she'll like you! Maybe she'll even come!" Eddie seemed desperate to believe his lie.

Richie wasn't having it. "No Eddie, she's already decided how she feels about us. She's going to keep you from us."

Eddie's mouth went into a thin, straight line. "You don't even know her Richie, give her a fucking chance." Eddie stood and went into the bathroom, slamming the door.

Richie got up and got dressed, thinking that Eddie was being an idiot. He wanted to tell him about the skype call but thought Eddie wasn't ready for that yet. Instead he went out in search of coffee. He found Bev and Ben sitting on the couch, Ben's arm around Bev.

"How's Operation Free Gazebo going?" Ben asked. Richie filled them in on the conversation. Both were angry that Myra was threatening to keep Eddie from them but also optimistic that they could convince Eddie, it was only day two after all.

## 9. Chapter 9

After everyone woke up they all decided what to do for the day. Bev wanted to go parasailing, Ben, Audra and Mike agreed to go with her. Bill and Stan were going to go hiking and convinced Eddie to join them. Richie wanted to stay in the house, he had a lot of work to catch up on. Everyone tried to cajole him into coming with them but he promised to join them for afternoon activities.

It made Richie a little sad to not join the boys hiking but part of the plan was for everyone to talk to Eddie one on one (or two on one). They hoped if he heard it from everyone at different points this week it would sink in. The group said their goodbyes and split up.

Richie cleaned up from breakfast and opened his computer, sitting down with fresh coffee to tackle emails. He really needed to hire someone to help with all this, he was tired of working on vacation.

The hiking group returned first, three or so hours later. Richie noticed that Eddie was looking sullen, he mumbled something about a nap and quickly left.

Richie raised his eyebrows questioningly at the other two. "We tried asking him about Myra and what they wanted for the future- dogs, kids, moving out of New York..." Bill started.

"It didn't go well." Stan finished.

"Didn't go well how?"

"He tried to avoid answering us at first but when we pressed him he started being a dick. He told Stan that *he* was in no place to question his life decisions, and that I didn't know anything since I married Audra right after college."

*Ouch.* Eddie usually wasn't mean, sure he was often grumpy, but rarely mean. Richie stood and threw an arm around Stan. "You okay, Stan the Man?"

Stan shrugged him off. He was always the least touchy-feely of the

losers. "I'm fine. Look, I'm just going to go meditate for a while." Meditation was his way of dealing with stress, one of his replacements for the drugs. He walked off.

Richie looked at Bill, "Is he okay?"

Bill watched Stan leave. "I'm not sure. Eddie never seemed to judge him, and Stan always appreciated that. I think hearing this was hard for him. I hope Eddie apologizes, it was a dick move."

Normally Richie wanted to defend Eddie but this was bad. Eddie obviously felt like shit but he couldn't take it out on the others.

"You know he's wrong, right?" Richie said to Bill.

"Hmm?" Bill asked, drinking some water.

"You and Audra. You didn't rush into things, you two are clearly perfect together. It's a little sickening, really."

Bill smiled at Richie. "Thanks man, I wasn't taking what Eddie said to heart."

"Good. We all love Audra." Richie sighed, "I hope I find something like that one day." Richie rarely spoke about love or relationships. He was known as a perpetual bachelor in LA but that was only because the love of his life was a 5 hour plane ride away.

"Richie, you will." Bill hesitated. "Maybe if you stopped pining over Eddie you'd find someone else."

Normally Richie would be angry but hanging on to this school boy crush for over a decade had worn him down. He still loved Eddie, and he probably always would but he knew Bill was right. Annoyingly, Bill was usually right. "If this week doesn't work I'll try." He needed to try for his own sanity.

Bill gave him a small smile. "Good, you deserve someone great Richie. Someone who will love you back, Trashmouth and all."

"Stop, you're going to make me blush, you devil you." Richie laughed, putting his cup in the sink.

Bill laughed too. "Somehow I doubt anything makes you blush anymore. I'm going to go read on the beach. See you later buddy."

Richie sat down on the couch to read. He had a stack of books that had been neglected and was excited to tear into one.

The others came back another few hours later, windblown and carefree. They all had a great time and told the others about it as they scrounged for food. Eddie still hadn't come out despite all the noise so Richie went to check on him.

He found him sitting on the bed looking at his phone. "Hey Eds." He sat on the edge of the bed.

"Hey." He said quietly, not looking at Richie.

"How's it hanging?"

"Not great. I was an ass to Bill and Stan." He was still staring at his phone, refusing to look at Richie.

"All of us are asses to Stan, it's a miracle he still hangs out with us." Richie tried to joke and Eddie just threw him a not-funny look. "Seriously though. None of us have ever done anything the others wouldn't forgive. This is the same. Just apologize to them and they'll forgive you."

Eddie sat up. "Do you think so?"

"Eds, I know so. They wouldn't be friends with me if they were that thin skinned." Eddie gave Richie a small smile.

"Well, I've got to go make amends." Eddie stood and hesitated. "Look, um, I'm sorry for this morning too. I was a dick."

"A giant dick. But that's what I like about you, you're just a giant dick attached to legs."

Eddie rolled his eyes. "I was wondering where trashmouth went for a minute there."

"Well, someone should compliment that excellent between the legs

feature of yours. And I don't think anyone else has seen it in action."

Eddie blushed bright red, "Beep fucking beep Richie." He walked out.

Richie smiled, Eddie may have been embarrassed but he didn't seem angry, which was a win for Richie.

He went out to join the others. "What are the afternoon plans?"

"We were thinking we'd take the pontoon out!" Bev said, excitedly. She loved being on the water. It always confused Richie that she ended up in Chicago, where you couldn't be outside nearly half the year.

Everyone nodded. Richie noticed that Eddie and Stan were missing. By the time he had changed into his swim trunks they were back and Eddie was talking quietly to Bill. They hugged. It looked like all was forgiven.

The losers loaded up a cooler for snacks and two for drinks and headed out. One of the reasons they all loved this space was that it was right on the water and the pontoon was only a 15 minute walk. Everything was close, making it easier to find your way back when drunk.

Bill volunteered to stay sober and drive, with Stan keeping him company. Everyone else settled in with a beer and started to talk. It wasn't long until they were talking about high school. Bill had found a good spot to drop anchor and was sitting with them, with Audra leaning against him.

"I think all of us were half in love with you," Eddie joked to Bev. Mike protested saying he never liked her that way but everyone else nodded in agreement.

"Ok Mike, who was your first crush then?" Bev asked.

Mike smiled. "That's easy. One of my family's friends had a girl my age. They'd come over to the farm once or twice a month for dinner. We always snuck out to see the animals and stargaze. I was half in love with her before I even knew what love was."

"Young love! That's so sweet!" Audra said. "What about everyone else?"

Stan told them about a jewish girl who went to his synagogue, he used to wait to walk her out to her parent's car. Ben talked about a girl in his original hometown, who had red hair. Everyone joke that he maybe had a thing for redheads.

Eddie and Richie stayed silent. Richie was thinking back to when he had Eddie had been together, however briefly.

## 10. Chapter 10

Summer before college, late July.

Richie felt like he had been half in love with Eddie Kaspbrak for years. Actually, he knew he had been. It was just that ever since that summer Eddie broke his arm he had a harder time denying it. And he stopped wanting to deny it.

Luckily,, a few weeks ago Eddie had kissed him after leaving the movie theatre. Richie had thought something was coming since Eddie had just taken a hit off his inhaler and looked nervous. Richie was teasing him about not needing the inhaler and Eddie told him it was for confidence. Then he kissed Richie.

Richie couldn't believe his luck. Eddie who he had loved and lusted over for years was kissing him. Eddie, who he dreamed about every night- sometime sweet, sometimes less sweet- liked him back. Richie kissed him back with gusto and immediately asked him to be his boyfriend. The two were more inseparable than ever.

A few weeks later, the two were making out in Eddie's bed. Mrs. K was at church and Richie had snuck in. Their make out session were still mostly sweet. Eddie was on top of Richie slowly kissing his neck. Richie moved his hands under Eddie's shirt and felt his chest, playing with his nipples.

The smaller boy groaned into Richie's skin, making Richie want to rip off all of Eddie's clothes. Richie wanted more but didn't want to push Eddie. He was happy just being able to kiss him. Eddie moved to Richie's lips, planting a quick kiss before sitting up.

"Get those luscious lips back here." Richie said, trying to pull Eddie down.

"I just wanted to look at you for a minute." Eddie smiled and leaned in to kiss Richie again. "I love you." He whispered into Richie's ear.

Richie froze. His brain stopped working. He stopped moving his hands and stared up at Eddie. Eddie seemed to realize that he said



the wrong thing and pulled back, "Sorry, Richie. No, I was joking."

Richie lightly pushed the boy off him and scrambled up. "I just...I can't do this. We're leaving for college soon. What are we doing?" Richie was looking frantically for his shoes. He needed to get out.

Eddie was staring at him. "What are we doing? Are you kidding? It took us years to get here! And we'll both be in New York for college!" He hadn't moved off the bed, watching Richie's wild movements.

Richie just looked at Eddie. He knew he loved Eddie so much it scared him. He knew that this was just a summer fling. Eddie would find some sweet boy in college and he'd leave Richie. Richie was certain of it. So Richie decided to leave first.

"Look, I'll call you later?" Richie kissed Eddie's cheek. "Bye Eds." He ran out the door.

Richie never called Eddie. Three weeks later he left for college. He and Eddie didn't talk until the next summer when they were back in Derry. Bill was having a bonfire and insisted they both come. Richie eventually worked up the nerve to walk over to Eddie and halfheartedly apologized for last summer.

Eddie just smiled, "Richie, it's not a big deal. I mean, it was then but it's been a year right? I'm over it. I started dating someone at school, he's great."

All Richie heard was 'I'm over you' and it broke his heart. He had no one to blame but himself and it killed him. The two started hanging out more once they went back to New York and Richie pushed his feelings down. None of Eddie's boyfriends or girlfriends seemed to last long and Richie convinced himself that they'd be together in the end.

Until this fucking engagement happened.

## 11. Chapter 11

"Earth to Richie, hello," Audra was waving a hand in front of his face. Richie blinked, pulled out of his memories.

"Don't wave that hand in front of me unless it's holding a joint or a beer." He answered more gruffly than he intended. He tried to recover. "What did you ask me love-of-my-love's wife?" .

Luckily, Audra smiled and let his first remark go. "Who was your first love?" Richie flushed. The losers knew not to ask that but Audra hadn't been there, she knew Richie carried a torch for Eddie but didn't know about their past.

"Someone I didn't deserve." He said, not looking at Eddie.

Bev sensed the embarrassment and stood. "I'm going in the water, who's coming?" She took off her covering and jumped in. Ben, Stan and Mike followed her.

"Come on in! It's fucking amazing in here!" She called.

Eddie didn't move, he was looking at Richie. "Come on buddy, you're next." Richie said, standing up and walking over to him.

"No, I'm okay, I'll stay with Bill and Audra." The two were already lost in each other and didn't seem to hear Eddie.

"Uh-huh,I think they want some alone time. Come on." Richie held out his hand to help Eddie up but Eddie shook his head.

"You give me no choice then." Richie leaned over and picked Eddie up. Eddie tried to squirm out but Richie had thrown him over before he could escape.

"Fuck you Tozier!" Eddie said, sputtering from the water.

*If only* Richie thought, standing on the edge of the boat. He crouched to jump in and felt someone grab his ankle, causing him to fall in.

The next thing Richie knew he was lying in the pontoon, faces

hovering above him. "Richie! Thank God, how many fingers am I holding up?" Eddie waved three fingers in front of Richie's face.

"Fuck off," Richie pushed Eddie's hand away and tried to sit up. His head hurt. He brought his hand to it and saw blood.

"See, he's already back to his charming self." Richie heard Stan say.

"Don't sit up." Eddie gently pushed Richie back down.

Richie shoved Eddie's hands off him. "What the fuck happened?" He felt like he was hit with a brick.

Eddie looked nervously at the group. "I grabbed your ankle when you jumped in and you hit your head on the boat. I'm sorry Richie!"

"Can't get rid of me that easily Eds. I'm Richie fucking Tozier." Richie said, closing his eyes again.

"No!" Eddie shook him gently. "You gotta stay awake so we can be sure you aren't deteriorating."

Richie opened his eyes again, annoyed. "First, you try to kill me and now you won't let me sleep? Fuck off." He closed his eyes again. This time he felt people pulling him into a sitting position. He opened his eyes and saw Stan and Mike pulling his arms. "Fuck you guys too. Why would I be deteriorating? I'm not an... an old shirt." *Ha, good one.*

"Richie, we're nearly back. Just stay awake for a little while until we know you're okay. You might have a concussion." Eddie looked so worried that Richie nodded his assent.

There was a mistake, Richie's head screamed from the small movement. He cradled his head in his hands until he felt someone poke him. "Here, take this." Eddie was handing him some pills and water.

"What is it?" Richie asked, swallowing the pills and some water.

"Just advil. It should help. You'll need to avoid anything strenuous for the next few days."

"Nurse Eddie, back in action. Can I get you to wear one of those little uniforms?"

"Well you can't feel too bad if you're cracking jokes." Eddie sat next to Richie. "I'm so sorry, I was trying to be funny."

"First mistake Eds, leave the funny you me. You've already got the market cornered on adorable." Richie smiled at Eddie to let him know he wasn't upset. It was just a mistake.

"Still, I'm sorry." Eddie looked so sad that Richie leaned over and put his head on the smaller man's shoulder. The movement hurt but it was worth it.

"Really, it's okay. I'll be fine, especially with nurse Eddie here."

Eddie put an arm around Richie and started to stroke his hair. "Why do I have to be a nurse and not a doctor?"

"I told you Eds, better uniform. That tiny skirt will look great on you."

"That's a candy striper uniform Richie, not a nurse."

"Even better, candy and the skirt." He could feel Eddie lightly shaking his head.

"Sure Richie, whatever you say."

The two stayed like that until they docked. Richie insisted on walking up to the house so Bill and Mike went on either side of him and helped him up. They lead Richie right to a couch and made him sit. Eddie got the first aid kit and sat next to him.

"I need to bandage your head." He said, taking out hydrogen peroxide and gauze.

"Just make sure I look sexy and dangerous." Richie flinched as Eddie cleaned out his wound.

"I don't have those kinds of skills." Eddie said as he applied a bandage to Richie's head then lightly wrapped it in gauze so it would stay. Eddie's small, sure fingers felt good and Richie leaned into the

contact. When he wasn't around the losers Richie wasn't touched much. He wouldn't admit it but he was actually a very cuddly person. He wanted to hug his friends and spoon his lovers. Unfortunately, one night stands rarely wanted to stay and snuggle after. He tried to save up all the small touches from the losers for when he was back in LA, to ration them until he was with his friends again.

Eddie finished the bandage and put his fingers under Richie's chin, moving his face towards him. Eddie's eyes scanned Richie's face and his work. "Am I going to make it Doc?"

"Oh, now I'm a doctor?" Eddie joked. Richie smiled. "You'll be back to your old insufferable self in no time." Eddie didn't move his fingers, still looking at Richie.

Again, Richie wanted to kiss Eddie but knew it still wasn't the time. While the head wound was a good excuse to act irrationally he knew Eddie would regret it. He needed to be free from Myra first. "Richie.." Eddie started after a minute.

"Yes Eds?"

"What did you mean when you said you didn't deserve your first love?" Eddie nearly whispered. The other losers were all in the dining room, talking and eating pizza. The two of them were alone.

"I didn't deserve you then." Richie answered honestly, there was no point in lying. *And I've worked for years to make sure I could deserve you now.*

"Did you love me?" Eddie said hesitantly as his hand moved to cup Richie's cheek.

Richie leaned into Eddie's hand. "You know I did. I was 17 and stupid. Then I waited too long and you moved on. I fucked up Eddie."

"Oh." Eddie looked like he wanted to say more and so did Richie. He wanted to apologize for messing everything up, for making Eddie think he didn't love him then, for ever hurting him. But he didn't. He wasn't ready to say all of that.

After another moment Eddie shook his head, seeming to come out of

a stupor. "Do you want to go eat?"

Richie nodded- mistake, his head screamed and he had to close his eyes for a minute. "Yes, let's grab some food before those pigs finish it all."

Eddie helped Richie up and then put an arm around his waist, bringing him to the table. The rest of the night was spent laughing and playing some other games. Eddie refused to let Richie drink so they stuck to party games like pictionary and catchphrase. No one wanted to be on Richie's pictionary team because he added a penis and balls to every drawing he did, even though he insisted it was hilarious. "I'm an artist unappreciated in my time!"

A few hours later, Richie was starting to nod off. "Nurse Eddie, am I allowed to sleep now?"

Eddie turned Richie's face to him. "No drainage, you haven't vomited and the lights aren't bugging you. I think you're in the clear."

"Thanks." Richie got up and hit his head on the light. "Fuck" he said, grabbing his head.

"Still a total klutz though. I'll help you." Eddie got up, putting his arm around Richie again and didn't let him go until they reached the room.

"Thanks Nurse." Richie fell to the bed, still in his swimsuit.

"Richie, you can't sleep in your suit. Really, you should shower after being in the ocean." Eddie chastised him.

"Unless you're helping me shower that's not happening." Richie said into the pillow.

"I can't...that's not what I meant." Eddie sputtered.

"I'm joking, you wouldn't be very helpful anyway. You can't even reach my head. You could really only clean my dick down. Which would be fine with me. Why am I complaining again?"

Eddie ignored Richie's monologue. "You should still put on clean

boxers, at least."

"Fine. Throw me a pair." Richie wiggled out of his swimsuit, exposing his butt to Eddie. If he wanted him to change he can deal with the nudity. Richie felt a pair of boxers hit his back.

"You could wait until I left." Eddie's voice sounded thick.

"You could have let me sleep in my swimsuit." Richie was having trouble putting on his boxers and not exposing himself to Eddie. He stood up, pulled the boxers on, and flopped back on the bed, face up. All of Eddie was flushed a delightful pink and his lips were parted.

"Well, I'll go to bed too- after I shower." Eddie grabbed clean boxers and his pajama bottoms and ran into the bathroom. Richie was asleep by the time he came out.

## 12. Chapter 12

Richie woke up the next morning with Eddie spooning him again. He was closer than he had been yesterday, now firmly pressed against Richie. Richie could feel Eddie's morning wood and resisted reaching around to grab him. Instead he sighed in frustration and went to take a shower. Eddie knew what he was doing, the bandage was still on his head. Richie gingerly unwrapped it and felt the cut. It seemed to be healing well.

When he came out of the shower (with boxers on this time) Eddie was sitting up, wiping the sleep from his eyes. "Come here, let me see your head." Richie sat and allowed Eddie to gently prod his cut. He hissed when Eddie's fingers came too close.

"Sorry!" Eddie removed his fingers but stayed close to Richie. "I think we need to get you a new bandage but it looks okay. Still no drinking today- or swimming!" He said as he went to get supplies.

"Nurse Eddie strikes again." Richie said to himself as he got dressed.

The group divided again. Richie wanted to go hiking today and got the okay from Eddie to go with Audra and Mike. Bev convinced Eddie to go tubing with her. The others decided to go into town for more supplies and some shopping.

The three picked an easy hiking path and set out. Not long into the hike Mike asked "So, how are things going with Eddie?"

Richie adjusted his bandage, it was itchy now that he was starting to sweat. "Well we're not fucking yet, so that's disappointing." Mike threw him a look. "What do you want to know?"

"Well, I was wondering how Operation Free Gazebo was going but also how...you two are." Mike finished, looking at Richie. Richie's favorite thing about Mike was his straightforwardness. If you were being an ass, he'd call you out. He didn't beat around the bush.

"Ooh, yes! I'd like to hear about that too," Audra said, wiggling her eyebrows at Richie. "He was pretty attentive to you last night."



"Well, he thought he gave me a concussion and he's the only one of us who knows any first aid." It was one of the few advantages of growing up around Mrs. K, Eddie definitely knew a lot about minor injuries. "So I'm not sure it wasn't just guilt."

"Don't lie, that was the excuse, not the reason." Mike said.

"Good ol' frank Mike." Richie responded but hearing someone else say what he had been thinking gave him butterflies. He told them about the conversation on the couch.

"About time you actually told him how you felt. You've been pining over him for years." Mike said once they finished.

"Well, I hold him about how I felt a decade ago. I just keep telling him I want to bend him over the kitchen counter now."

"We all eat on those counters, no sex. Also, I think he knows how you feel now. You keep staring at him like you want to devour him." Audra said.

Richie didn't know he was quite that obvious. *Oops*. He flushed slightly. "Don't worry man, he looks at you the same. He's just more subtle than you." Mike said reassuringly.

"He does?" Richie had totally missed that.

"Well, he only looks at you when you aren't looking at him. And you look when he isn't looking at you. It's some Shakespeare shit."

Richie smiled. Hearing other people say they saw the same things he felt made him feel much better. He hoped that having everyone talk to Eddie was working and that Myra would be history once Eddie went back to New York.

The trio continued to hike for another half hour then turned back. They were the first ones back, Richie went to take a nap while the others watched an old movie. He woke up to Bev drawing on him with lipstick.

"What the fuck!" He grabbed the lipstick from her hand.

"Just making you purdy for your boyfriieeendd," she sang.

Richie walked to the bathroom, his face was covered in bright red lipstick. "We both know he's not my boyfriend. That's the whole point." He got a washcloth dirty and started scrubbing.

"Well he kept getting red whenever he talked about you. And refused to talk about Myra. So my money is on you two." Bev sauntered over to the bathroom and stood in the doorway.

"This shit isn't coming off." Richie had only succeeded in making his skin red.

"You need some vaseline. Or maybe your boyyfrieenddd can kiss it off." Bev started to make smooch-y noises.

"Stop saying boyfriend like that. He'll hear you and we'll both be in deep shit. Can you check Eddie's bag? He probably brought vaseline." Bev walked over to Eddie's bag and rifled through it, eventually throwing Richie some vaseline.

"Hey Bev?" She walked back over as Richie slathered the thick goop over his face. "What...what else did Eddie say?" Richie felt like a teenager asking.

As Bev opened her mouth to answer Bill came in "Any dinner preferences?" He walked to the bathroom. "Damn Richie, Eddie has terrible aim."

"Fuck you." The lipstick was finally coming off. "Lady Bev did this."

"Guys, you gotta see Richie!" Bill yelled.

"I'm going to kill you." Richie told Bev, she just laughed.

## 13. Chapter 13

The next few days went well. All the losers, and Audra, spent some one on one time with Eddie. He seemed to agreed that he shouldn't marry Myra but Richie knew Eddie wasn't one to back out of commitments. It worried Richie, he hoped Eddie wouldn't marry someone he didn't love but if he felt liked he owed Myra he might stay anyway. Mike assured Richie that Eddie didn't seem like he would stay with Myra but wouldn't tell him any more than that. The others were tip lipped about what they talked about with Eddie, no matter how much Richie wheedled them. All they would say was that they thought Eddie would make the right decision.

On the last night Richie and Eddie were walking on the beach, talking.

"You seem down Eds, what's wrong?" Eddie had been quiet all day.

"I just...I don't want this to be my last time here." He kicked some sand.

"Well it won't be, we'll be back in six months. Bi-yearly remember?"

"Myra found out I'm here. She checked my plane ticket. She's furious." Eddie wouldn't look at Richie.

Richie eyebrows shot up. "What did she say?"

"I haven't talked to her. She's been calling and texting me. I turned my phone off." Eddie seemed uncomfortable with his confession.

Richie wanted to scream *THEN WHY ARE YOU MARRYING HER!* But he knew it would only make Eddie shut down. Instead he stopped and put his hands on Eddie's shoulders and turned the other man towards him. "Eds, Eds, look at me." Eddie still refused to meet his eyes so Richie put a couple fingers under his chin and raised it until Eddie was reluctantly looking at him. "Eddie, you don't seem happy with Myra." He went with the frank approach.

"I am!" Eddie protested but without much heart.

"Are you?" Eddie didn't respond. "Be honest with me, we've been best friends for decades."

"I thought I was." Eddie's eyes watered. "I convinced myself I was, until I came here. Being around all of you strips away my lies. Being with all of you made me see that I'm not happy." Tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Eddie, please don't marry Myra. *Please*," Richie pleaded. He felt his eyes watering too. "Stay in New York or don't, leave your job, become CEO, do whatever makes you happy. But please, don't marry her."

Eddie paused for a long moment. "I don't love her." He said as he collapsed into Richie's chest.

"I know you don't Eds. So don't marry her." Richie stroked his hair.

Eddie nodded slightly. "I won't. I can't. It's not fair to her." Richie released a breath he didn't know he was holding.

"Good, thank you Eds. Figure out what you want, okay?" Richie was shaky with relief.

"I know what I want." Eddie said solemnly as he kissed Richie. Richie was too shocked to respond for a moment and Eddie started to move back, seeming embarrassed.

"No!" Richie said, louder than he intended. He pulled Eddie to his lips and kissed him hard. He poured a decade of emotion into that kiss, he needed Eddie to know how much he meant to him.

Eddie gently pushed Richie into the sand and landed on him, deepening the kiss. His legs were on either side of Richie, trapping him in the sand. Eddie was licking the inside of Richie's mouth and his hands were in Richie's hair, gently tugging it.

Richie's hands moved to Eddie butt and he squeezed, which earned him a small sigh from Eddie. *That sound!* Richie's pants grew tight. Eddie's lips moved to Richie's neck, leaving a trail of kisses down to his collarbone. He reached where Richie's neck and shoulder met and he started to suck. It had been a long time since Richie had a hickey and it made his breath hitch. Eddie rolled his hips, grinding their

erections together. Both moaned, Eddie into Richie's collarbone and Richie into the air.

"Fuuuckkk Eddie. You feel so good." Richie gasped out. Having Eddie's familiar weight on top of him was the best feeling in the world.

"Mmm, you taste so good," Eddie said, continuing to suck on Richie's neck.

Richie moved his hands under Eddie's shirt, feeling his abs and his chest. He was rewarded with another small groan. Eddie started to kiss Richie's jawline, moving up to his lips again. He wanted all of Eddie, right here on this semi-private beach.

But he knew it was wrong. He knew it and hated it. Eddie was still engaged and, while that status didn't mean much to Richie, he knew Eddie would regret it. Richie didn't want anymore regrets with Eddie. He wanted him free and clear.

"Eddie, baby," Richie tried to stop him by lightly putting his hands on Eddie's shoulders and pushing gently. Eddie ignored him and continued kissing Richie. "Eddie, we've got to stop." Richie whispered, already hating himself.

Eddie stopped immediately and sat up, looking confused. His face was flush and his lips were puffed and bruised. Richie wanted to yell 'kidding!' and pull him down again. But he couldn't do that to Eddie, to them.

"You're still engaged. Please, break up with Myra and then we'll take a vacation on our own. Wherever you want. Clothes optional."

Eddie looked embarrassed, like he had just remembered his fiancée. "Fine, we'll stop." He said coldly as he crawled off Richie.

"No! No, not stop...just pause! Please, I don't want you to regret this, or us." Richie got up and offered Eddie a hand.

Eddie stood without him. "No Richie, it's fine. I've been rejected by Richie Tozier before. I know what it looks like." He started to walk away. Richie stood in place for a minute, trying to breathe. He wasn't

rejecting Eddie! Eddie had to know that! Had Richie messed up again? Richie took a minute to calm down before he started looking for Eddie. He couldn't find him. The smaller man was sneaky when he wanted to be. Richie looked for him desperately for a while and then decided to head back to the house. He had to find Eddie and explain.

When he went back to the house he asked the others and they said Eddie had stormed in, gathered his things and said goodbye. He'd taken an early taxi to the airport.

Richie had a pit in the bottom of his stomach, he had lost him again. He tried calling Eddie and it went straight to voicemail. He sent him a desperate text "Please Eddie, I'm sorry. Call me." He didn't say what he wanted to, that he loved Eddie, that he'd do anything to fix this.

Richie started crying and the others gathered around him. They wanted to know what happened. Richie gave them the brief details then went to bed. The others tried to talk to him but Richie just wanted to be alone.

He had lost Eddie, again.

## 14. Chapter 14

Richie went home the next day with everyone else. Weeks passed. He tried to call Eddie but the calls went unanswered. He had even send a fruit basket, hoping Eddie would appreciate the joke. Richie talked to the other losers and they said that they had talked to Eddie but he wouldn't say much. He seemed very guarded and wouldn't talk about Richie or Myra.

Richie finally hired an assistant, which cut down his work weeks to a more reasonable 50 hours. He struggled to fill his spare time though, he started to see his LA friends more and joined a gym. He started dating a few guys. He tried not to think about what was missing.

He wondered if Eddie would ever talk to him again. He really tried not to think about that especially, it broke his heart. Even if Eddie wouldn't be his boyfriend he needed him as a friend, even if Myra came with him.

One day, Richie was sorting through his mail and saw a postcard from Bev. She was moving in with Ben in Nebraska (though Richie wouldn't be surprised if they ended up somewhere on the coast). She made a comment about how maybe it seemed too fast. *Nah Bev, you two have been half together for years, it's about damn time.* Richie was happy she was happy, even if thinking about them together made his stomach churn with jealousy.

Richie turned on some music, thinking about what to do with Stan. He'd convinced him to come out for a long weekend next week. It took a lot of wheeling and dealing and some (mostly) fake tears. Stan had never been to LA and Richie was excited to show him around.

Richie heard the doorbell. "Who the fuck?" It was 7 on a Friday, Richie was in his bathrobe and boxers. He wasn't expecting anyone. *I hope it's not Mark.* Mark was someone he's been on two dates with and was trying to convince himself to like. There was nothing wrong with Mark, it was just that he wasn't Eddie.

He tied his robe and went to the door. He looked through the peephole and didn't believe his eyes. It was Eddie.

Eddie. Eddie was here in LA. At his door. What the actual fuck.

He opened the door to a sheepish Eddie.

"What, were you just in the fucking neighborhood?" Richie meant it to sound like a joke but it came out like an accusation.

"I left Myra. And New York." He gestured to some bags near his feet. "I came here."

Richie's mouth hung open and he could only stare. "Wanna invite me in Trashmouth?" Eddie looked more nervous the longer Richie stared.

"Yea, yea, come in. Um, are you hungry? I just started taking some cooking classes, I'm not half bad, who knew? I'm finally eating out less...haha, didn't even mean that one. But we could order something if you want? Lots of good places nearby." Richie was babbling and he knew it. But Eddie was at his door, with bags. That implied he was staying. Here. In LA. With Richie.

"No, I'm not hungry." Eddie picked up his bags and brought them in. Among them Richie noticed a plastic bag with no label.

"Cool cool, cool...um, my guest room is this way. You can put your stuff in there." Richie wanted to touch him, just to prove that he was real. He restrained himself.

"Oh, okay," Eddie seemed disappointed.

"My guest room is clean. Promise. I mean, I wasn't expecting anyone but the sheets are clean."

"No, it's just. Look." Eddie turned to face Richie. "I'm sorry. I flipped out on you in Hawaii. And you were right. I needed to sort my shit out before I could be with you." Richie didn't respond, his mouth just hung open. "Trashmouth speechless what a sight." Eddie joked awkwardly.

"You fucking ignored me for weeks. After I did the right thing." Richie's anger roared, he'd been trying to ignore it but Eddie's apology brought it back.



"I did. You're right. You can be furious at me. You should be furious with me." Eddie played with the cuff of his shirt sleeve. "But here's the thing, your speech was the kick in the ass I needed. I needed to hear that, especially after hearing similar things from the others... so I went back to NY and broke up with Myra. I quit my job. I packed my shit and put most of it in a storage locker. I wanted to be free and clear...for you." Eddie fidgeted more.

"For me? What do you mean?" Richie needed him to spell it out. He was done with being half certain.

"Fuck Richie, you're going to make me say it?" Richie nodded. "I love you, you asshole. I have since we were kids. No one else makes me as happy-or angry- as you. You're it." Richie didn't say anything and Eddie paused, looking at him. "I get it, you're still pissed. That's fine. I'll stay in your guest room, or I can stay in a hotel. Whatever. Just promise to give me a chance eventually. Give us a chance." Richie was still frozen. Eddie sighed and picked up his bags. "Guest room was this way?" He gestured down the hall.

Eddie was several feet away before Richie processed everything he said. "Fuck! Wait! No! Stop!" He cried.

Eddie turned around, looking like he was trying not to cry. "Do you want me to find a hotel?"

"No, I don't want you in a fucking hotel. I want you in my bed right fucking next to me." He took a few steps and was next to Eddie. "I may not let you out for weeks."

Eddie smiled obviously relieved and said "Thank God, I hate hotels. Other people's sheets? Disgusting."

Richie leaned in to kiss him. He meant to start slow, so savor it, but Eddie had other ideas. He grasped Richie's hair and pulled him deeper into the kiss.

"Shit Eds, eager much?" Richie laughed into Eddie's mouth.

Eddie pulled back slightly and looked Richie in the eyes. "We've been playing cat and mouse for over a fucking decade. You'll excuse me for

being done with the bullshit. I want you Richie, no more waiting."

"Well, in that case," Richie picked up Eddie by the thighs and Eddie immediately wrapped his legs around Richie. Eddie kissed him again, his hands around Richie's neck, playing with his hair. Richie pushed his tongue into Eddie's mouth, wanting to taste him. Coffee, chocolate and... Eddie. Delicious. Eddie returned the kiss with vigor, licking Richie mouth.

Richie groaned into Eddie's mouth and squeezed his ass, making Eddie yelp. "Been wanting to do that for years." He grinned at Eddie. Eddie responded by placing featherlight kisses on his neck then moving up to his ear and lightly sucking on it. Richie could feel Eddie's breath in his ear, making him even harder.

Richie carried Eddie to the bathroom, holding his ass the whole time. "I might never let your ass go, I need you to know that. It's mine now." Richie practically growled.

"Fine by me," Eddie whispered in Richie's ear, licking the curve again. Richie shuddered.

Once they made it to the bedroom he laid Eddie on the bed, taking the opportunity to look at him. His face was flush, his hair was tousled and his lips were red and bruised. "You look so fucking sexy." Richie couldn't believe this was happening.

Eddie grinned up at him, "Were you expecting someone? Dressed like that?"

Richie had forgotten he was wearing his bathrobe. "Oh, just some fine piece of ass I knew from high school."

Eddie laughed. "Anyone I know?"

"Maybe- short? Kinda likes to dick around with my feelings? Fucking gorgeous lips?"

Eddie pulled Richie on top of him. "Sounds like a catch," he whispered into Richie's ear. Richie trembled slightly. He started to kiss Eddie's neck, leaving sloppy kisses along the curve of his jaw and down to his shirt collar. He realized how many clothes Eddie had on.

"Too many clothes," He growled as he at up and pulled Eddie's shirt off, throwing it across the room. He looked at Eddie and rubbed his hands on Eddie's chest, lightly grazing his nipples. The contact made Eddie arch into Richie's hands.

"Mmm your hands are so warm, and big," He grinned.

"Oh God Eds, if you keep talking like that I won't last long." Eddie's smile melted into a moan as Richie took one of his nipples into his mouth, sucking on it. His other hand was ghosting over Eddie's pants, lightly cupping his erection.

Eddie's hands were on Richie's back, scratching him up and down. Eddie moved them and started to undo his pants. Richie grabbed his hand and brought it above the smaller man's head.

"Don't you fucking touch that. I'm taking all of this off. I've earned it." He undid the button and put his thumbs into Eddie's pants, pulling them down in one fluid motion.

Eddie's erection nearly hit Richie's face. Richie moved his hand back over it and cupped Eddie through the thin underwear. "I love that you wear briefs, leaves nothing to the imagination." He said as he gently moved his fingers up and down Eddie's erection, barely touching it. Eddie thrust into the contact, his eyes closed.

Richie stood and threw off his bathrobe then he leaned back over Eddie and started kissing him again, grinding their hips together. The two stayed like that for a moment, each enjoying the feeling of the other. Eddie's hands were back in Richie's hair, tugging gently, Richie's hands were on Eddie's hips and thighs, feeling him with abandon.

Eventually Eddie broke the kiss and looked at Richie, "I want you in me," he groaned, moving his hands to Richie's erection to enunciate his point. Richie's breath hitched and he saw spots.

"Are you sure? We don't have to." Richie would stop if Eddie wanted to. He might die from blue balls but he'd do it.

"I'm sure, I want to feel you," Eddie reached in Richie's boxers and

grabbed him. Richie didn't think his erection could get any harder, it was nearly painful. Eddie slowly starting pumping Richie.

"If you keep doing that," Richie's breath hitched as Eddie's grip tightened, "we definitely won't be having sex." Eddie squeezed once more then released, moving his hands back to Richie's hair.

Richie broke contact to grab the lube from his nightstand and to pull off Eddie's boxers. Eddie's erection sprang free. Richie pulled Eddie's hips to the edge of the bed and knelt, running his hands over Eddie's thighs. He poured lube on finger and gently pressed it against Eddie's entrance. Eddie hissed as his finger went in. "Does that hurt?"

"No, it's just, different. Keep going."

Richie didn't need any more encouragement. He started to move his finger in and out as he felt Eddie relax. Eddie groaned as he got used to the contact. He took Eddie's erection in his mouth, gently licking his head. Eddie mewled softly. Those sounds would be the death of him.

Richie brought his mouth around Eddie and started moving up and down. Eddie was gripping the bedspread, moaning 'fucckk' slowly and deeply. Once Richie had a rhythm going he slipped another finger into Eddie, making him moan again. Richie started to move his mouth and fingers in sync, wanting to make this good for Eddie. Eddie started moving his hips, trying to get Richie to speed up.

"Richie, get fucking inside me." Eddie said through gritted teeth.

Richie removed his mouth with a gentle 'pop' and stood, putting a condom on his erection. He replaced his fingers with his erection and pushed into Eddie, nearly cuming on the first thrust. He paused, making sure Eddie was okay and then started to move. He grabbed Eddie's leg and put it on his shoulder, trying to get a better angle. Eddie moaned loudly and Richie grabbed his erection again, pumping him quickly. The better angle worked and he hit the spot inside Eddie, making him moan once more as he came over Richie's hand.

Richie thrust once more and felt himself cum too, seizing with his own orgasm.

Richie pulled out and threw away the condom as he leaned over to kiss Eddie. He moved to lay next to him, his arm around the smaller man.

"I think I'll like LA." Eddie said as he cuddled next to Richie, playing with Richie's chest hair.

"Oh, you'll love it." Richie kissed the top of Eddie's head. "I've got so much to show you."

"More than I just saw?" He joked.

"Definitely." He propped himself up on his elbow. "Eddie Spaghetti, I've got so much to show you, now that you're here." Eddie smiled and kissed him. The two laid tangled together, legs and arms draped over one another.

After a few minutes Richie asked, "Hey Eds, what was in the bag you brought?" It didn't look like part of his luggage.

"Oh, I bought a nurse's outfit. You seemed so excited about it." Eddie looked at Richie and grinned.

"You'll be the death of me Eddie Spaghetti," Richie said, kissing him again.